

The City of Galena Park

City Commission Meeting

Date: January 30, 2018

A special meeting of the City Commission of the City of Galena Park was held at City Hall in the Council Chambers, Tuesday evening at 6:00 P.M. on January 30, 2018.

Present were:	Esmeralda Moya	Mayor
	Rodney Chersky	Commissioner
	Oscar Silva, Jr.	Commissioner
	Barry Ponder	Commissioner
	Mayra Gonzales	City Secretary
	Robert Collins	City Attorney

Absent:	Eric Broussard	Commissioner
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- I. Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Mayor Moya gave the invocation
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Consideration and possible approval of the minutes of the regular meeting on December 19, 2017. Minutes were approved at the meeting on January 2, 2018.
- V. Consideration and possible approval of the accounts payable through January 30, 2018. Commissioner Chersky moved to approve the accounts payable through January 30, 2018. Commissioner Ponder, 2nd the motion. Mayor Moya called for the vote: Commissioner Chersky...Aye, Commissioner Silva... Aye, Mayor Moya... Aye..., Commissioner Ponder...Aye...4 Ayes...Motion Carried.
- VI. Consideration and possible approval of the memorandum of understanding between the City of Galena Park and Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation, Inc. concerning grant to purchase firefighter personal protective equipment in the amount of \$31,450.00. Commissioner Chersky moved to approve the memorandum of understanding between the City of Galena Park and Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation, Inc. concerning grant to purchase firefighter personal protective equipment in the amount of \$31,450.00. Commissioner Ponder, 2nd the motion. Mayor Moya called for the vote: Commissioner Chersky...Aye, Commissioner Silva... Aye, Mayor Moya... Aye..., Commissioner Ponder...Aye...4 Ayes...Motion Carried.
- VII. Consideration and possible approval of the memorandum of understanding between the City of Galena Park and Winnie Community Hospital, LLC DBA Riceland Medical Center concerning the lease of the city building located at 2124 Clinton Dr. for the purpose of a health clinic. Commissioner Chersky moved to approve the memorandum of understanding between the City of Galena Park and Winnie Community Hospital, LLC DBA Riceland Medical Center concerning the lease of the city building located at 2124 Clinton Dr. for the purpose of a health clinic. Commissioner Ponder, 2nd the motion. Mayor Moya

called for the vote: Commissioner Chersky...Aye, Commissioner Silva...Nay , Mayor Moya... Aye..., Commissioner Ponder...Aye...3 Ayes...1 Nay...Motion Carried.

- VIII. Consideration and possible of the full-time employment of Cynthia Jimenez as Police Officer- Police Department. Commissioner Chersky moved to approve the full-time employment of Cynthia Jimenez as Police Officer- Police Department. Commissioner Ponder, 2nd the motion. Mayor Moya called for the vote: Commissioner Chersky...Aye, Commissioner Silva... Aye, Mayor Moya... Aye..., Commissioner Ponder...Aye...4 Ayes...Motion Carried.
- IX. Consideration and possible approval of the quarterly investment report ending December 31, 2017. Commissioner Chersky moved to approve the quarterly investment report ending December 31, 2017. Commissioner Ponder, 2nd the motion. Nanette Moreau, Bookkeeper, stated for the quarter ending December 31, 2017 we began the with \$2,180,595.01, we had one cd that matured in the general fund giving us an interest of \$440.58 with an ending balance for December 31, 2017 of \$2,181,035.59. Mayor Moya called for the vote: Commissioner Chersky...Aye, Commissioner Silva... Aye, Mayor Moya... Aye..., Commissioner Ponder...Aye...4 Ayes...Motion Carried.
- X. Report by City Attorney on Financial Investigation.

Mr. Collins stated to the Mayor and Commissioners that they have been engaged for a little over a year since the council appointed him as their city attorney at the Mayor's direction, in the internal investigation of a lot of the systems and problems that they understood that existed within the operations of the city. That has comminated in a number of changes being implemented by the Mayor, the most recent of which is related to the operations within the money handling departments, of course change like this does not happen overnight. What they have found is that there has been instances where employees who were hired by prior administrations, not by this administration, have been in positions where perhaps there was a systemic method of isolating people within the operations of the city, that is what it would appear to be. Of course you have auditors who have evaluated this and have recommended changes every year where they saw that changes needed to be made, and those changes have been implemented by the Mayor and by the administration. What that still left, and the Mayor had suspicion of this, still left the opportunity for there to be something going on that no one knew about, and as a result in the fall through her own efforts the Mayor determined that certain changes needed to be made, that were made and that revealed a theft. They are in process now of referring that for prosecution to the District Attorney's office and the lead investigator, Rob Cimmons, who is also a yellow jacket is here. The Police Chief and also the Mayor decided that they need assistance with an outside investigation of this, and it has revealed that in fact there was some theft. However, there has been some claims about this made on the internet and Facebook, first of all he would like to say that anybody who makes any claims to have knowledge about this should bring themselves forward and present themselves to law enforcement and give us the information, because what has been reported is wildly wrong and can only come from misinformation or somebody that is trying to drive misinformation to the public. To give you an example, if we file a civil suit to recover what it is that we know to be stolen, it would be in the justice of the peace court; that will give

you some idea of the magnitude of what we are talking about. However, that does not mean that it is not serious and in fact we believe that a felony has been committed and we have referred to the district attorney's office, they are looking at it now, we have given them all the information that they wanted. That is probably the most that we should say about it at this point, except that the investigations continue. If there is somebody out there or people having meetings with the people who are the suspects for this and they have knowledge or information about it, they should come forward with it, because if somebody does claim to have inside knowledge about theft of money from the city we would like to know how they know about that or how they may have been involved in it and have some knowledge of it or have admissions from people who were involved in it. It is only with the Mayor's leadership that this was caught, because a lot of it happened over a holiday period when things can easily be slipping through the cracks. When you don't know what you don't know, it is hard to know what is going on. It would appear that things were set up in such a way that, that could happen. Steps have been taken to resolve that so that there can be no such theft in the future, controls have been put in place, and physical security have also been addressed and changes have been made their as well. Everybody could be confident that everything that should be done has been done and that you see to it that, relatively significantly less loss than what has been reported by people on the internet who apparently don't know or have some information we do not have has been found and we are going to do everything we can do to have it prosecuted to the full extent of the law and anybody involved in it or who was involved to anything similar to that will likewise be rooted out and will also be referred for full prosecution. That is what we have been directed to do and that is what we are going to do and I think that we are close to being at the end of it but the investigation will continue.

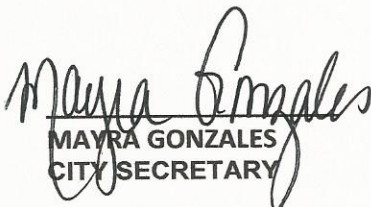
Mayor welcomed Cynthia Jimenez.

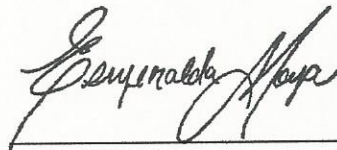
- XI. Comments by public for up to three minute period- per posted procedures and rules- any person who makes a personal insult or uses derogatory terms will forfeit the remainder of their three minute period.

No comments made.

- XII. Commissioner Ponder made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Chersky, 2nd, the motion ... Mayor Moya called for the vote: Commissioner Chersky...Aye, Commissioner Silva... Aye, Mayor Moya... Aye..., Commissioner Ponder...Aye...4 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourn at 6:11 p.m.


MAYRA GONZALES
CITY SECRETARY


APPROVED